

Serial No. 09/486,629

REMARKS

Examiner Wachtel has rejected the originally filed claims 1-4, 6 and 12 of the present application. For the reasons which follow, applicant respectfully traverses this rejection of the Examiner. The applicant does, however, wish to extend appreciation to Examiner Wachtel for the quite detailed review of the claims of the present invention leading to the finding of patentable subject matter of the originally filed claims of the present application and an indication of the allowability of claims 13, 23, 28, 33, 38, 40 and 48 if rewritten.

Claims 7 and 23 have been amended to emphasize that the top liquid absorbent textile of the composite is being referenced and not the composite. It is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claims 7 and 23 under 35 U.S.C. § 112 has been overcome. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

"Density" has been replaced in the specification and claims with "weight per unit area" in a manner suggested by Examiner Wachtel. It is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claims 4, 13, 23, 28, 33, 38, 40 and 48 under 35 U.S.C. § 112 has been overcome. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 11, 13, 17, 18, 20 and 48 have been amended to be in independent form including all of the limitations of the respective base claims and any intervening claims. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that claims 11, 13, 17, 18, 20 and 48 and the claims which depend therefrom are in condition for allowance for the reasons previously recognized by the Examiner. Favorable consideration is respectfully requested.

By the lack of application of the references cited by Examiner Wachtel (aside from Nagahama and Joseph) and cited by the applicant and others like them within the classes or

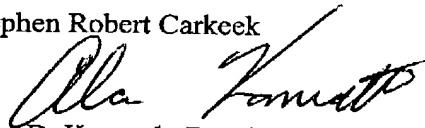
Serial No. 09/486,629

subclasses searched, the Examiner apparently recognizes the clear patentability of the present invention over any of these references.

Therefore, since the claims of the present application have been shown to include limitations directed to the features of applicant's table or counter mat which are neither shown, described, taught, nor alluded to in any of the references cited by the Examiner and by the applicant, whether those references are taken singly or in any combination, the Examiner is requested to allow claims 4, 6, 7, 9-14, 17, 18, 20, 23-26 and 28-49, as amended, of the present application and to pass this application to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen Robert Carkeek



Dated: September 23, 2004.

Alan D. Kamrath, Reg. No. 28,227
NIKOLAI & MERSEREAU, P.A.
Attorneys for Applicant(s)
900 Second Avenue South
Suite 820 International Centre
Minneapolis, MN 55402
Tel: (612) 392-7306
Fax: (612) 349-6556

**This Page is Inserted by IFW Indexing and Scanning
Operations and is not part of the Official Record**

BEST AVAILABLE IMAGES

Defective images within this document are accurate representations of the original documents submitted by the applicant.

Defects in the images include but are not limited to the items checked:

- ☐ BLACK BORDERS
- ☐ IMAGE CUT OFF AT TOP, BOTTOM OR SIDES
- ☐ FADED TEXT OR DRAWING
- ☐ BLURRED OR ILLEGIBLE TEXT OR DRAWING
- ☐ SKEWED/SLANTED IMAGES
- ☐ COLOR OR BLACK AND WHITE PHOTOGRAPHS
- ☐ GRAY SCALE DOCUMENTS
- ☐ LINES OR MARKS ON ORIGINAL DOCUMENT
- ☐ REFERENCE(S) OR EXHIBIT(S) SUBMITTED ARE POOR QUALITY
- ☐ OTHER: _____

IMAGES ARE BEST AVAILABLE COPY.

As rescanning these documents will not correct the image problems checked, please do not report these problems to the IFW Image Problem Mailbox.